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VARIETY

AUDITORIUM-ARENA

101

'Flintstones On Parade' In Sock Aussie Bow As Arena Spectacle

Perth, Jan. 9.

A touring spectacle based on the Hanna-Barbera cartoon characters is a natural after the terrific successes of the "Disney on Parade" shows, (in which exec producer Sarnoff was also involved). "The Fabulous Flintstones on Parade" has been financed and mounted by a West Australian media conglomerate, TVW Enterprises and is set to tour Australia this summer.

Emphasis of the superb production is on the visual, nicely backed by a good musical content. Plot, such that it is, involves Fred Flintstone's daughter Pebbles (Michelle Hawks) searching for her pet dinosaur, Dino.

This places her in a series of adventures involving the other H-B characters and some brilliantly-staged sequences. Standout are those involving dancing dominoes and prancing pool balls. Overall the 120-minute show is of sufficiently

Flintstones On Parade

Presented by TVW Enterprises in association with Sarnoff International Inc. Exec producer, Thomas W. Sarnoff. Produced and directed by George M. Cahan; choreographed and staged by Tom Hansen; Music supervised, arranged and conducted by Dominic Frontiere; Written by Bob Ogle. Costumes, W.J. Evans; prod. design, Eilers, Evans & Assoc.; technical supervisor, Casey Gibbs. Voices of Harry Corden, Alan Melvin, Don Messick, Arnold Stang, Janet Waldo, John Stephenson, Casey Kasem and Sammy Davis Jr. Specialty acts, Andre Schweizer, The Wazzans, Ken & Lorraine Orcutt & Wayne Melton. Opened Jan. 1, Perth Entertainment Center, Perth, Australia; \$10.20 top.

high standard to please the masses. It has a bonus in that it has enormous novelty.

The Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" track from "Saturday Night Fever" gives a contemporary note to a clever staging of a sequence involving ghouls and ghosts which the dancers segue into "Dem Bones" with the help of some large props made to resemble skeletal segments. And from that the troupe is transported into ancient Arabia and a splendid Eastern sequence, with myriad dancers and super effects. Heavily borrowing from Borodin (or Forrester & Wright's "Kismet"), the spectacle is staggering on the 100 by 50-foot thrust stage of the Perth Entertainment Center.

The finale is set in a circus with specialty performers, sky acts and every aspect of spectacle is milked dry to create an effect designed to awe the viewer, which it does.

The show will obviously be a great draw for kids, but it has been cunningly conceived to keep adult attentions at the same time. Additional to the pert and leggy Michelle Hawks, there are some subtle undertones in the script that prevent parents from becoming bored.

Early and conservative estimates for the Aussie tour of seven major cities indicates a gross of close to \$10,000,000 Down Under alone. —Miba.

Friars' Aria To Merrill

Metropolitan Opera baritone Robert Merrill will be the guest of honor at a stag luncheon to be tendered him by the Friars Club March 16 at the Hilton Hotel, N.Y. It'll be the highest priced nontime feed by the Friars with duets at \$45 per person.

Milton Berle will be the roastmaster.

Roller Disco Arenas Fracture 'Em In Ottawa

Ottawa, Jan. 9.

Close to 100 injuries have been suffered in the past 10 weeks of "roller disco" in this capital's two emporia, Skadium and Skateway.

Skateway prexy Jack Minuk says he spent \$2,500 on first-aid equipment and even put in a special door for a stretcher to carry victims through to an ambulance. Skadium prexy Lawrence Herscovici meantime is planning another maple-floored "roller disco" in the Gattineau region, on the Quebec side.

Hub Revives Plan For Major Arena

Boston, Jan. 9.

The Boston Redevelopment Authority, acting on behalf of Mayor Kevin White, has refilled legislation aimed at building a new arena in Boston. "We want Boston to maintain its posture as a big league city," said Robert Ryan, BRA director.

The proposed legislation requests that a special commission study the arena situation in Boston, and that \$300,000 already earmarked for the project be expended for the study.

The second part of the package is the same as last year's proposal, calling for the approval of the latest arena plans put together by developer M. Zuckerman. Fred Langone, city councilman who reps the North End where Boston Garden is located, is sponsoring a plan to renovate the 1,400-seat Garden, which he said, would upgrade the entire area.

Paul Mooney, prexy of Boston Garden and Boston Bruins, who is with Sportservice Inc., which has owned the building for past four years, said: "We have given our commitment to the mayor and his plan, developed by Zuckerman. We will not change that commitment. We feel that something has to be done and done quickly. The last thing we want is to be put into a position where some people could say we undermined the mayor's plans. More than a year ago, Irv Levin, then the owner of the Celtics threatened to move the team unless an arena was built, and the mayor responded by asking Zuckerman to direct a task force that would deliver a new building to Boston."

CELLAR DOOR PARDS GO SEPARATE WAYS

Washington, Jan. 9.

Jack Boyle and Sam L'Hon-medieu, co-owners of Cellar Door Prods. here, have dissolved their partnership.

The arrangement gives Boyle ownership of the Cellar Door, a top nitory here, and Cellar Door Concerts, one of the nation's largest concert promotion firms. L'Hon-medieu will continue to operate the Warner Theatre here, which he plans to book continually with music and legit productions.

The pair will continue to maintain their joint interests in the Philadelphia Fury, a North American Soccer League team owned by a group of rock artists including Mick Jagger, Peter Frampton and Paul Simon.

Victor Borge to conduct opera for the first time. He'll do "The Magic Flute" at the Cleveland Opera in November.

Burl Ives Interrupts Itinerary For D.C. Gig

Burl Ives will interrupt a European tour to plane back to Washington, April 4 for a one-nighter before Pres. Carter at the White House. He'll return to England April 6 to resume a concert series of 36 dates in that country.

Ives is slated to start his European junket March 10 with a lineup of 50 dates of which 14 will be outside of England, mainly in the Scandinavian countries. He winds up the tour June 3.

Irish Circuses Seek Subsidy As Art Form

Dublin, Jan. 9.

Pressure for the recognition of circuses as an art form eligible for government grants is developing in Ireland.

The problems of low profit margins for the three major Irish circuses, Duffy's, Fossett's and Courtney's, was raised in the Dail (Congress) recently and the government was asked to amend the Arts Act to include circuses and provide them a measure of support from the Arts Council.

The government spokesman admitted that there is state assistance for circuses in some European countries, but said he did not envisage any new legislation in Ireland.

BIRMINGHAM VOTES \$4.8-MIL WING FOR EXHIBITION HALL

Birmingham, Jan. 9.

The Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center Authority has voted to build a two-story addition to its Exhibition Hall at a cost of \$4,800,000. Groundbreaking is scheduled for late this month or early February with completion targeted in 15 months.

New space will provide an additional 60,000 square feet and increase the net usable space on the main floor to 120,000 sq. ft. It will also permit the main floor to be subdivided for separate events to be held simultaneously. Its second level will comprise 15,000 sq. ft. of space.

Construction contract has been awarded to E.C. Coston Co. of Birmingham whose bid was \$4,609,000. Fee to architects Renneker, Smith, Kirkwood Associates is calculated at \$276,000 of which \$73,000 has already been paid. Project will be financed by \$3,300,000 in bonds sold earlier this year, and partially from a reserve fund for depreciation. Exhibition Hall originally opened in December, 1971.

Reed Quit S.C. Spoleto In Tiff With Menotti; Outlook Good For '79

Charleston, S.C., Jan. 9.

Spoleto USA, due to repeat come summer in this coastal city, entered 1979 with good financial news and a management problem. Festival president Theodore Stern reported indebtedness has been reduced from \$330,000 to \$280,000 and said banks have agreed to renew their loans.

Stern has moved into acting assistant manager's slot, replacing veteran Christine Reed, who departed, citing "professional differences" with Gian-Carlo Menotti, founder of both Spoleto-Italy and Spoleto-USA events.

Reed "did a tremendous job," Stern said. "Without her, we wouldn't have had two successful festivals" in Charleston.

Twin Cities' Concerts In 1978 Near \$8-Mil Gross For New High

Minneapolis, Jan. 9.

Concerts in Minneapolis and St. Paul music halls were an \$8,000,000 business in 1978, a record year. Touring artists grossed a phenomenal \$5,864,430 in the Twin Cities. Minnesota Orchestra, observing its 75th anni, added an estimated \$2,000,000 plus, based on the symphony's year end fiscal report.

Aside from the Minnesota Orchestra's subscription series, there were 169 concerts here. Twenty-six were SRO and 16 grossed over \$100,000. Boxoffice champs were the Eagles, Steve Miller Band and Pablo Cruise. They drew 65,000 to a mid-summer outdoor concert at Metropolitan Stadium, grossing \$650,000.

Runnerup was the Performing Arts Co. of the People's Republic of China. Chinese troupe played four performances at Northrop Auditorium, taking in \$190,614 against a \$218,000 potential.

St. Paul Civic Center had 14 shows which drew more than \$100,000 each. Leading were the Rolling Stones, pulling an SRO \$180,280. Bob Dylan, returning to his home state for the first time in years, grossed a lofty \$162,790. Also selling out were the Moody Blues, \$156,979; Steve Martin & Steve Goodman, \$146,636; Aerosmith & Exile, \$132,950; John Denver, \$127,968; Foreigner & Ramones, \$123,020; Jackson Browne & Karla Bonoff, \$119,284, and Bob Seger & Silver Bullet, \$118,942.

Other attracting large houses in St. Paul were Electric Light Orchestra, \$132,930; Boz Scaggs & Little River Band, \$132,664; Ted Nugent, \$122,726; Beach Boys, \$115,271, and Neil Young with Crazy Horse, \$104,679. In a smaller setup, Jimmy Buffett & Emmy Lou Harris also went lean at \$44,600.

While the St. Paul Civic Center had a lock on most of the blockbuster shows, 20 artists played to capacity at other sites. Peter, Paul & Mary were SRO at the Minneapolis Auditorium, and the Statler Bros. with Barbara Mandrell were ditto at Metropolitan Center. Northrop Auditorium recorded sellouts with Gordon Lightfoot and Santana.

John Prime teamed with Leon Redbone sold out O'Shaughnessy Auditorium.

Orchestra Hall was packed for Harry Chapin, Andres Segovia and Jean-Pierre Rampal. Guthrie Theatre's SRO bookings included John Hartford, Ramsey Lewis, Michael Hennessey, Warren Zevon & Richie Belzer, and Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes. Al Jaregu, Shawn Phillips and Art Garfunkel drew capacity throngs to the Orpheum Theatre.

Boxoffice total does not include unreported results of a concert series at the State Theatre or receipts from a dance subscription series at Northrop Auditorium.

OLD PANTAGES SITE DISMANTLED & MOVED

Edmonton, Alta., Jan. 9.

The old Strand Theatre here, to be dismantled and moved to Fort Edmonton Park, closed to public viewers Dec. 31. Howard Pechet, whose family has owned the theatre for years, reported the dismantling process "a very delicate and expensive procedure."

Although the theatre is closed, the remaining stores and shops in the Strand Building will remain open for a while longer. Structure will be demolished to make way for a \$36,000,000 office complex.

Built in 1913 by Alexander Pantages, the vaudeville circuit operator who functioned from Chicago to San Francisco together with Klondike Kate Rockwell of Dawson in the Yukon Territory, the Strand was first known as the Pantages a name-drop of bookings includes the early Marx Brothers, Will Rogers, Buster Keaton, Stan Laurel, Sophie Tucker, Eddie Foy and Mickey Rooney.

Circa 1925, when vaudeville declined, theatre was used briefly for dramatic productions. It closed, then reopened in 1931 as a combined film situation with intermittent concert engagements.

Top Pop, Rock Artists Open '79 In Germany

Frankfurt, Jan. 9.

Some top international artists will be starting '79 with concert romps through West Germany. Italian superstar Angelo Branduardi and his ensemble, Ariola recording artists, are set for eight performances in Germany, including Frankfurt's Century Hall, the Hamburg Music Hall and Stuttgart's Liederhalle.

The Grand Music Hall of Israel, with Shoshana Damar and the Karmon Dancers, has nine shows set for Germany in January, and 14 concerts are booked for Rock group Queen.